

SHORTRIDGE, SAMUEL M.

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SPEECHES

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# Speeches Honoring Abraham Lincoln

Samuel M. Shortridge

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Address made on the Floor of the Senate by  
Senator Shortridge on February 12, 1931, -  
Lincoln's birthday.

Mr. President: The Republic, "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," in the throes of dissolution; the Union of Washington and Jackson, framed by the wisdom and sanctified by the blood of brothers, about to be rent asunder; the "government of the people, by the people, and for the people" in mortal danger of perishing from the earth - in that dark hour of estrangement, doubt, and fear the Great Captain of our country's salvation came.

He came, and thenceforth all was clear. Simple in speech, plain in manner, straightforward in action; tender as a child, fearless as a hero, humble and lowly, he came to speak and to act. Born of southern parents and reared in the broad prairies of the West, whose very winds sang liberty, he realized the curse of bondage and the blessing of freedom. From the unfelled forest, from the log cabin and the country store, from the humble forum and obscure dwelling, from out the ranks of the people the Great Captain came. He came, and statesmen paused and wondered; he spoke, and a Nation hearkened to his counsel.

Devoted to truth and the right, opposed to falsehood and the wrong; scorning the tricks and subterfuges of the self-seeking and abhorring the mean and base; loving his country with a devotion that made him forgetful of all else save the preservation of the Union, the incomparable leader rose. In judicial tribunal and hall of state, in capital and village, in stately mansion and



log hut bewildered men listened to his words and saw, as they had never seen before, the darkness, the light, and the path; the wrong, the right, and the remedy.

Who was this man that came unheralded out of the West? Who was this man that rose above great statesmen of his day - who was as earnest as Phillips, as gifted as Baker, more profound than Seward, more wise than Chase, more logical than Douglas, more eloquent than Everett?

Who was this man that combined in one soul the simplicity of a child, the wisdom of a sage, and the foresight of a prophet?

Wheresoever among men there is a love for disinterested patriotism and sublime attachment to duty; wheresoever liberty is worshiped and loyalty exalted, his name, his life, his deeds are known. Today his image is in all hearts, his name is on all lips. That humble, loving, forgiving, sublime man was the rail-splitter of Illinois - sainted and immortal Abraham Lincoln - Abraham Lincoln, child of poverty, champion of freedom, savior of the Union.

Rejoice and give thanks to God. The dark hour of brotherly estrangement is gone forever. The Constitution of Washington and Jackson remains. The Union, strong and great, endures. The "government of the people, by the people, and for the people" did not perish. The sons of America march all one way.

And for all these blessings we stand today beneath the one and only banner of the loyal heart, to pay the tribute of our veneration and gratitude and love to Abraham Lincoln.

